

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03835 01 OF 02 101051Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----071563 101056Z /12

O 101005Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8630

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 3835

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, LE

SUBJ: LEBANON: AMBASSADORIAL CONTACTS

1. SUMMARY. CHRISTIAN LEADERS IN EAST BEIRUT SOUND SOME-  
WHAT LESS COCKY THAN WE HAD THOUGHT. FONMIN BOUTROS RE-  
LATIVELY OPTIMISTIC AND THINKS DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT,  
NEGOTIATIONS FOR WHICH NOW IN PROGRESS, IS POSSIBLE. PRES-  
IDENT SARKIS, HOWEVER, HAS STILL NOT DECIDED TO WITHDRAW HIS  
RESIGNATION. END SUMMARY.

2. THROUGH INGENUITY SENIOR FSL, I MANAGED HAVE TELEPHONE  
CONVERSATIONS WITH PIERRE AND BASHIR GEMAYEL AND CAMILLE  
CHAMOUN AFTERNOON JULY 9. TOLD ALL THREE WE HAD HEARD DIS-  
TURBING REPORTS OF FEISTINESS ON THEIR PART AND THAT PEOPLE

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WERE MAKING IRRESPONSIBLE STATEMENTS ABOUT FINISHING WITH  
SYRIANS ONCE AND FOR ALL. SITUATION WAS VERY DANGEROUS AND  
THIS NO TIME FOR IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIONS. WE HAD BEEN USING  
OUR INFLUENCE WITH SYRIANS AND OTHERS BUT WE NEEDED EVERYONE'S  
COOPERATION IF FURTHER SLAUGHTER TO BE AVOIDED.

3. PIERRE GEMAYEL UPBRAIDED ME FOR FAILURE OF US TO SUPPORT

CHRISTIANS AND SAID WE SHOULD PAY NO ATTENTION TO STATEMENTS VARIOUS IMBECILES MIGHT MAKE. HE WAS THE ONLY AUTHORITATIVE SPOKESMAN FOR KATAIB. BASHIR GEMAYEL SAID HIS BOYS WANTED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES IN PEACE AND QUIET BUT COULD NOT BECAUSE SYRIANS ALL OVER THE PLACE. THEY WERE IN DANGEROUS PROXIMITY IN NUMBER OF LOCATIONS AND SOMETHING COULD BREAK OUT AT ANY MINUTE. IN ANY EVENT, KATAIB HAD NOT STARTED THE TROUBLE. CHAMOUN SAID WESTERN WORLD TURNING ITS BACK ON CHRISTIAN LEBANON BUT AFTER SOME PROMPTING DID SAY HIS MEN WOULD NOT FIRE FIRST.

4. BOUTROS TELLS ME HE UNDERSTANDS FROM DANY CHAMOUN THAT ISRAELIS HAVE DELIVERED SIMILAR COUNSEL OF RESTRAINT TO CHRISTIANS. THREE LEADERS DID NOT SOUND PARTICULARLY COCKY TO ME, BUT RATHER SUBDUED AND WORRIED. MY BRITISH AND FRENCH COLLEAGUES, HOWEVER, HAD HEARD SIMILAR STORIES OF CHRISTIANS BEING COCKY.

5. EVENING OF JULY 9 I CALLED ON BOUTROS AT PALACE. HE SAID HE AND SAMI KHATIB AND COL. AHMAD AL-HAJ OF INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES HAD JUST BEEN MEETING WITH DANY AND SOMEONE FROM KATAIB TO DISCUSS DISENGAGEMENT IN EAST BEIRUT. HE THOUGHT SOME PROGRESS BEING MADE AND WAS HOPEFUL SOMETHING COULD BE WORKED OUT.

6. I ASKED ABOUT SYRIAN CONDITIONS. WAS IT TRUE THEY WERE  
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DEMANDING THAT CHRISTIANS DISARM? BOUTROS SAID, NO, THERE WAS NO SUCH CONDITION. WHAT SYRIANS WERE ASKING WAS THAT MILITIAS WITHDRAW TO "PREVIOUS POSITIONS" AND THAT LEBANESE FRONT STOP BLOCKING SARKIS REGIME IN ITS EFFORT GOVERN COUNTRY. (THIS IS BOTH BETTER AND WORSE THAN I HAD THOUGHT. WHILE IT IS ENCOURAGING SYRIANS ARE NOT ATTEMPTING UNREALISTIC UNILATERAL DISARMAMENT, IT IS DISTURBING THEY ARE SEEKING STIFLE POLITICAL DISSENT, DESIRABLE AS THAT MIGHT SEEM IN SHORT RUN.) HE NOTED THAT IF SYRIAN ARMY APPEARED TO LOSE THE CURRENT CONFRONTATION IT WOULD HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR REGIME IN DAMASCUS.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8631  
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EXDIS

7. BOUTROS SAID SARKIS WAS STILL UNDECIDED ON WHETHER TO STAY OR RESIGN. WE AGREED THAT IF HE WAS GOING TO REAP BENEFIT OF SUPPORT ENGENDERED BY THREAT TO RESIGN, HE WOULD HAVE TO CASH HIS TRUMPS QUICKLY. I SAID WE WOULD BE PREPARED SUPPORT ANY REASONABLE PLAN PRESIDENT MIGHT HAVE, BUT IMPORTANT THING WAS TO HAVE A PLAN. BOUTROS AGREED AND ALSO AGREED THAT IN THE LONG RUN IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO GOVERN THE COUNTRY UNLESS SOMETHING COULD BE DONE TO DISARM THE MILITIAS AND OTHER ILLEGAL ARMED ELEMENTS.

8. WE DISCUSSED CAIRO RESOLUTION, WHICH PROVIDES FRAMEWORK FOR BALANCED CHRISTIAN-PALESTINIAN-MOSLEM DISARMANENT, AND BOUTROS SAID KUWAITI FOREIGN MINISTER EARLIER IN DAY HAD SUGGESTED THEY SHOULD TRY TO REVIVE THIS. I SAID THAT WAS MY VIEW TOO AND THAT I WAS SURE WE WOULD BE PREPARED  
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TO WEIGH IN WHEREVER WE COULD IN ORDER TO HELP LEBANESE GET IT RESTARTED.

9. BOUTROS ASKED WHETHER WE WOULD ALSO BE PREPARED TO WEIGH IN TO SUPPORT A LEBANESE REQUEST FOR THE SYRIANS TO WITHDRAW. I SAID I WOULD ADVISE THEM STRONGLY AGAINST DOING THAT, BECAUSE WE THOUGHT THE SYRIAN PRESENCE WAS ESSENTIAL. IF THEY HAD SOME OTHER FORCE AVAILABLE TO REPLACE THEM, THAT WOULD BE DIFFERENT. BOUTROS SAID SYRIANS HAD LOST CONFIDENCE OF CHRISTIANS IN GENERAL (HE THOUGHT KHADDAM'S IMPRESSION

THAT NINETY PER CENT OF CHRISTIANS SUPPORTED SYRIANS WAS INDICATIVE OF POOR STATE OF SYRIAN INFORMATION) AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW THEY WERE GOING TO BE USED. HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD HONOR LEBANESE REQUEST FOR REDEPLOYMENT, AND THAT IMMEDIATE PROBLEM COULD BE DEFLATED, BUT QUESTION OF ANTAGONISM BETWEEN THEM AND LEBANESE FRONT WAS PERMANENT HEADACHE.

10. BOUTROS SAID HE MIGHT ASK ME TO COME OVER THIS AFTERNOON (JULY 19) TO TALK TO PRESIDENT ABOUT RESIGNATION. I ASKED HIM WHAT HE THOUGHT WOULD HAPPEN IF PRESIDENT DID RESIGN. HE SAID COUNTRY WOULD COME APART AND BE DIVIDED UP INTO WARRING FEIFDOMS. IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO ELECT A SUCCESSOR AND IT WOULD BE THE END OF INDEPENDENT LEBANON.  
PARKER

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## Message Attributes

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